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VERIFICATION IN ALL ITS ASPECTS, INCLUDING THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE FIELD OF VERIFICATION

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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BULGARIA

[Original: English]

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1. Recent positive developments in the international environment are characterized by an increased multilateral cooperation in the field of security, including arms control and disarmament issues. Alongside the improvement of the international climate as a result of the end of the cold war, serious security concerns arise, as existing and newly emerging conflicts and tensions in different parts of the world threaten peace and security. Preventive and peace-keeping diplomacy, as well as effective arms control and disarmament agreements, remain, therefore, instrumental for the success of global efforts to strengthen international peace and security.

2. Increased willingness of States to cooperate in security-related matters, including reduction and control of armaments, should contribute to establishing an international climate of trust and understanding. The elaboration of effective arms control and disarmament verification procedures could significantly promote the maintenance of confidence among nations. Application of such procedures enables States to take the necessary steps to redress situations arising as a result of non-compliance with arms control and disarmament commitments.

3. The Government of Bulgaria attaches great importance to strict implementation of the existing arms control and disarmament agreements. It supports the effective functioning of their respective verification mechanisms - being integral parts of these agreements or additionally negotiated as a necessary supplement to existing legal provisions.

4. The set of 16 verification principles agreed upon by the United Nations Disarmament Commission could serve as a basis for further consideration of the increasing role and various forms and methods of international verification. The 1990 comprehensive study by a Group of Qualified Governmental Experts on the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Verification 1/ is another significant contribution to building an international consensus on a verification concept and a viable strategy that would help ensure universal compliance with all arms control agreements and other security-related commitments.

5. In the 1990 report of the Group of Governmental Experts, verification is defined as "a process which establishes whether the States parties are complying with their obligations under an agreement". 2/ In the context of the emerging new international order, such processes should play a major role in multilateral cooperation to enhance the foundations of peace and security on a global and regional level. The study also underlines the importance of verification in arms limitation and disarmament.

6. A significant part of the 1990 United Nations verification study remains relevant in the new international environment. Some of the basic findings of the Group of Governmental Experts, however, seem to have been highly affected by the prevailing political constraints at the time of writing. A number of

important security-related developments, as well as increased emphases on multilateral negotiations in the aftermath of the collapse of the bipolar global security system, call for new approaches to ensure an effective involvement of the United Nations in verification activities.

7. Global and regional concerns about proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms in regions of political tensions or conflict, are central elements of a new international thinking about arms control and verification. There is a growing recognition that peaceful settlement of regional conflicts would be a decisive contribution to progress in securing global international peace and stability in the future. The role of multilateral processes and institutions for peace and security is also increasing. Those changes in the international environment seem to have important implications for arms control and verification.

8. The Secretary-General's report entitled "An agenda for peace" 3/ points out that preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building are key objectives of the United Nations efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts and for the preservation of peace in the world. Bulgaria believes that arms control and verification activities could effectively contribute to international actions to strengthen peace and stability. Specific ways and means of achieving those objectives and enhancing the existing machinery, are outlined in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era". 4/

9. Recently concluded multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements provide quite a significant new experience for developing further the concept of international verification.

10. The 1992 Vienna document on Confidence- and Security-building Measures (CSBMs), the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), as well as the Treaty on Open Skies, introduce various new procedures and methods of verification of compliance. Both the Vienna document and the CFE Treaty establish a system of verification based on detailed annual exchange of information and specific notifications regarding weapons holdings (CFE, CSBMs) and military activities (CSBMs), whose accuracy can be verified by inspection of selected zones or units.

11. The establishment of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) as a follow-up of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) of 3 April 1991 is another significant development in international cooperation to promote methods of verification related to security matters. The main task of UNSCOM is to facilitate international verification of Iraq's compliance with the provisions of that resolution and to organize destruction or removal of the proscribed materials in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The experience accumulated by UNSCOM while carrying out on-site inspections, aerial surveillance, as well as other verification-related activities, provides an important contribution to the establishment of a multilateral verification system.

12. The UNSCOM verification activities, while not envisaged in the 1990 report of the Group of Governmental Experts, constitute an important precedent of other verification-related activities to be authorized by the Security Council in the

future. In this way, the United Nations may make further significant contributions to the verification of arms limitation and disarmament agreements.

13. The United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures is an important international contribution to the efforts to create an atmosphere of global openness and transparency. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms represents a further step in this direction by providing a significant input for future verification-related activities. Bulgaria has furnished the relevant information for the maintenance of those United Nations instruments and intends to continue to cooperate in the future.

14. The signature in Paris of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague, are events marking the beginning of unprecedented multilateral verification activities of the whole international community. The comprehensive and detailed verification mechanism provided for in the Chemical Weapons Convention is a significant contribution to developing new approaches to disarmament-related verification that would be widely applied in the 1990s. The Convention sets higher verification standards that could be used to upgrade, as appropriate, the verification activities of other international organizations with monitoring functions similar to those of the future organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons.

15. The 1990 verification study contains a recommendation for the development of a United Nations "consolidated data bank of published materials and data provided on a voluntary basis by Member States on all aspects of verification and compliance". 5/ The United Nations can play an important role by facilitating the dissemination of data related to verification to a wider audience.

16. The Government of Bulgaria considers it useful that, along with the future developments in the field of verification, further research should be carried out within the United Nations to enable States to assess the state of the art and to elaborate further steps in verification activities. In examining more productive utilization of multilateral resources used to verify arms-related agreements, such a follow-up study could focus on prominent developments since the 1990 study and could attempt to:

(a) Ascertain the positive impact of the new international political environment on the prospects for effective implementation of recommendations contained in the 1990 United Nations verification study;

(b) Elaborate further on aspects of verification on which no specific recommendations were made in the 1990 verification study, such as:

(i) Fact-finding capabilities and mandate of the Secretary-General with regard to arms control agreements lacking detailed verification provisions;

(ii) Involvement of the United Nations in monitoring activities as a result of Security Council resolutions;

(iii) Verification-related actions with regard to peace-keeping operations;

(iv) Use of aerial surveillance for verification-related activities;

(v) Use of satellites for the establishment of an international satellite verification system;

(c) Consider and formulate possible new principles, concepts and methods of multilateral verification activities;

(d) Analyse ways of utilizing linkages between United Nations verification activities at different levels;

(e) Explore approaches to integrating verification-related information by the United Nations;

(f) Examine the role that the Conference on Disarmament might play with respect to verification.

17. A follow-up study on verification in all its aspects should not be seen as a duplication of the 1990 study, but rather as an attempt to build upon elements that have remained valid in the new international environment of the 1990s. In no way should such a study be contemplated as a vehicle that could interfere with the Security Council responsibilities relating to non-proliferation and arms control.

18. The Group of Governmental Experts expressed in its 1990 report the view that the development of a United Nations verification organization should be subject to consideration as the international environment changes. New elements may have emerged which strengthen the rationale for the establishment of such an international system, which could well be explored in a follow-up United Nations study on verification in all its aspects.

19. The process of consolidation and adaptation of the verification experience accumulated by various subregional and regional developments will, no doubt, continue in the future. Verification-oriented procedures and methods may require the creation of appropriate institutions to ensure their effective implementation. Establishment of regional verification organizations, whenever appropriate, may also contribute to the successful attainment of the main objectives of this process.

20. The General Assembly, in its resolution 47/45 of 9 December 1992, acknowledges the fact that "the critical importance of verification of and compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements is universally recognized" and that "the issue of verification of and compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements is a matter of concern to all nations". Verification and compliance issues thus remain high on the agenda of the United Nations.

21. The Government of Bulgaria attaches great importance to efforts towards strengthening international peace, security and stability. It is essential, therefore, that the process aimed at creating and improving the international verification concept and machinery should continue with a view to taking fully into account the new realities of the global political environment.

Notes

1/ A/45/372 and Corr.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 91.IX.11).

2/ Ibid., para. 12.

3/ A/47/277-S/24111.

4/ A/C.1/47/7.

5/ A/45/372 and Corr.1, para. 263.